

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present Amendment is in response to the Final Office Action having a mailing date of July 1, 2004. Claims 1 and 3-22 are pending in the present Application. Applicant has amended claims 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22. Applicant has also canceled claims 1, 3-4, and 12-15. Consequently, claims 5-11 and 16-22 remain pending in the present Application.

In the above-identified Final Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 7-11 and 20-22 are allowed. The Examiner also indicated that claims 5, 6, 16, 17, 18, and 19 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant gratefully appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 7-11 and 20-22 are allowed and claims 5, 6, 16, 17, 18, and 19 contain allowable subject matter

Applicant has amended claims 17-22 to remove reference letters and numerals for steps in the methods. Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to claims 12-13 and 17-22 do not alter the scope of claims 12-13 and 17-22. Applicant has amended claims 5 and 16 to incorporate the limitations of base claims 1 and 12, respectively, as well as intervening claims 3-4 and 13-15, respectively. Consequently, Applicant also respectfully submits that no new search is required.

Applicant has amended claims 5 and 16 to incorporate the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5 and 16 are allowable as currently presented. Claims 6 and 17-19 depend upon claims 5 and 16, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6 and 17-19 are allowable as currently presented.

This application is under Final Rejection. Applicant has presented arguments hereinbelow that Applicant believes should render the claims allowable. In the event, however, that the

Examiner is not persuaded by Applicant's arguments, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the Amendment to clarify issues upon appeal.

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-4, and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,138,189 (Kalkunte) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,483,671 (Helm).

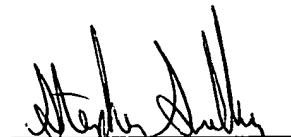
Applicant has canceled claims 1, 3-4, and 12-15. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 3-4, and 12-15 is moot.

Applicant's attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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